

west area (*W.A. Naturalist*, vol. 3, 1953, p. 189). I find, however, in my records a reference to an individual of the species which was shot at Busselton in 1934. On January 11, of that year, Mr. Roy Maegregor gave me a specimen whose dimensions I noted as follows: length, 21½ in.; wing, 22½ in.; tarsus, 2 in.; the legs were white; nails, horn; bill, horn; iris, dark blue; and facial disc dark grey. The bird was not sexed.

A large number of Straw-necked Ibis were present on the Broadwater at the time.

—H. M. WHITTELL, Bridgetown.

Incipient Song in Juvenile or Female Blue Wrens.—On September 6, 1953, on the Muehea-Gingin road in the vicinity of Lake Catambo, a group of about 8 Blue Wrens (*Malurus splendens*) was under observation for about half an hour as they fed in a gum and wattle thicket. The birds used a monosyllabic "flock" note, a short "tip" as they moved about. There was only one fully plumaged male in attendance and this was quite silent but on several occasions one of the juveniles or females was heard and seen to utter a short snatch of song. The birds frequently came within 8 feet as they fed. It was impossible to tell whether the songs all came from the same individual or whether they were juveniles or females; none had any blue on the wings though all had blue on the tail and chestnut beaks and eye patches.

—JOHN WARHAM, Leederville.

Occurrence of Red-cared Firetail and Red-winged Wren in the Darling Ranges.—When collecting for the W.A. Museum along the Albany Highway on February 28, 1954, I examined a dry creek bed near the 53-mile peg (from Perth). The precise locality was about one mile along an old timber track leading off from the Highway to the west, on the Perth side of the 53-mile peg. The country is mostly wandoo forest with a few scattered jarrah trees and the usual sclerophyllous ground flora. The Red-winged Wrens (*Malurus elegans*) were feeding in the thickets near the creek bank. The Red-cared Firetail (*Zonaeginthus ocellatus*) were found in the same area, and in the company of the Red-winged Wrens. I saw 5 finches and there were large parties of Wrens, there being at least 15 birds in one group, including 3 fully-plumaged males. Nearby was a company of the Banded Wren (*Malurus splendens*). Specimens of the finch and the Red-winged Wren were collected for the Museum.

—K. G. BULLER, W.A. Museum.

Sunbathing of Senegal Turtledove.—On September 12, 1953, in a garden at Leederville an adult Senegal Turtledove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) was noticed squatting on a gravel path at right angles to the strong sun. The tail was fully fanned and the left wing, that on the sunny side, half extended with the primaries separated a little. This attitude was held for several

minutes and then the left wing was raised vertically and fully extended. The sun could now beat on the bird's left flank and underwing. The other wing remained folded to the body. This posture was again retained for more than a minute before some disturbance sent the bird off. Sunbathing appears to be a regular habit among many birds, particularly with juveniles and it has been suggested that the separation of the feathers is to allow the sun to reach the naked skin and by irradiation to assist in the production of Vitamin D. (see *British Birds*, xl, pp. 172-174, and xli, pp. 304-305 for discussion and photographs of this habit for various European species). Vertical elevation of the wing to enable the sun to reach the flanks does not appear to have been recorded though it is probably a common practice.

—JOHN WARHAM, Leederville.

Wood Sandpipers at Lake Mungal.—In view of a recent review by K. A. Hindwood and A. R. McGill (*Emu*, vol. 53, pp. 1-13) of the Australian occurrences of the Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), the presence of a pair of these birds at Lake Mungal, approximately 50 miles north of Perth, may be worth recording. The Sandpipers were first noted on December 5 and 6, 1953 and again, presumably the same pair, during a second visit on December 12 and 13, 1953. The birds were quite approachable and excellent views were obtained with x 6 binoculars and x 25 telescope. The characteristic features were the wholly white rump, noted both during flight and while the birds were preening, grey breasts, prominent white eyestripe, mottled backs and rather long legs. They were noticeably greyer than a Common Sandpiper (*T. hypoleucos*) feeding nearby, nor did they move their tails up and down as persistently as does this latter species. In these Wood Sandpipers tail wagging and head bobbing seemed to be indicative of slight uneasiness. On both occasions the birds were feeding on the same patch of mud where they also rested, bathed, and preened. When a hawk flew over flying high the Wood Sandpipers crouched low in the water with their bellies awash and the same flight-intention movement took place when they saw me emerge cautiously from cover.

—JOHN WARHAM, Leederville.

Protective Freezing by the White-fronted Chat.—The distraction display known as the "broken wing trick" is well known in the White-fronted Chat (*Epthianura albifrons*). This note reports another reaction to an enemy during the breeding season which may not be so well known.

On August 28, 1953, at a salt lake a few miles north of Kalannie, a pair of the above species were observed carrying food into a small samphire bush. After the female had entered the shrub on one occasion, I approached rather incautiously but the bird did not leave. She was observed from a distance of about two feet perched near the nest which contained four small